SECOND LOOK AT OSCAR – PART 2

(May 24, 2005)

Q. **How many judges will be participating in OSCAR during the pilot year?**

The current number of judges signed up is 258 (as of May 24, 2005). Judges have until May 31, 2005 to sign up. The final list of judges participating in OSCAR will be posted on OSCAR, FLCIS, and NALP by June 3, 2005.

Q. **When will participating judges have access to applicants' uploaded materials for the Fall 2005 application season?**

Judges will have access to third-year students' materials about noon EDT on September 7, 2005 (the Wednesday after Labor Day). Law school graduates will be able to submit applications via OSCAR during the summer; those applications will be available to judges immediately.

Q. **What's the purpose of the "Recommender CC Emails" on the law school registration form?**

An applicant designates recommenders for each judge by typing in the name and email address of the recommender, along with the email address of the recommender's assistant in the "cc" box underneath the recommender's name. An email invitation is automatically sent to that recommender and the cc'd assistant as soon as the first applicant submits their addresses. That email includes the username and password for the recommender to upload recommendations on behalf of all the applicants that designated him/her. Only by using that recommender's designated username and password can someone upload the letters for that recommender. OSCAR registration gives schools the option for an additional "backup" by allowing each school to designate one email address that will receive all the automatic email invitations for recommenders designated by that school's applicants. This would allow someone in the law school to find a recommender's username and password if needed. This "universal cc" will supplement (not replace) the cc and the recommender email addresses typed in by the applicant.

Q. **What type of system rights does the law school have?**

OSCAR has four types of system rights (Administrator, Edit Law School Admin, Edit Student Accounts, and Read-Only). The Administrator is the person that the law school identified on the OSCAR sign-up form. The law school's Administrator will have full access to the system, to include monitoring and managing the applicants and recommenders from the law school, submitting applications for students (in special circumstances), issuing logins/passwords to

law school staff, and building reports. (<u>Note</u>: Only the law school's Administrator will have the ability to run reports.) The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will issue each law school one login and password for the designated law school Administrator.

The Administrator can also designate other users in each of the remaining categories. The Edit Law School Admin category allows the user to add new law school admin accounts or edit existing accounts (such as change passwords and/or assign additional rights), and view the list of recommenders. This category also allows users to view applicant profiles and applications, or (in special circumstances) to upload documents and submit applications on behalf of an applicant. The Edit Students Accounts category allows users to create/edit students accounts and (in special circumstances) to upload documents and submit applications on behalf of an applicant. The Read-Only category allows users simply to view the applicant profiles, uploaded applicant documents, and applications.

Q. **What type of technical support will be available during this upcoming hiring season?**

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has set up the following help desk phone number and email box for the law school administrator to report technical issues:

Help Desk Line: 202.354.3005
OSCAR Email: oscar-support@dcd.uscourts.gov

Q. **Where do we go if we have more questions or need more information?**

As additional information about OSCAR becomes known, it will be disseminated electronically through NALP. The OSCAR working group has established two avenues for questions: by email to oscar-support@dcd.uscourts.gov and by telephone to 202.354.3005. The OSCAR law school representatives can also serve as a resource:

Marilyn Drees   Allison Heverin
marilyn.drees@yale.edu   a-heverin@law.northwestern.edu
203.432.1691   312.503.1281

Terry Galligan   Shelley Rudge
tgalligan@law.berkeley.edu   serudge@wcl.american.edu
510.642.7746   202.274.4251

A FIRST LOOK AT OSCAR – PART 1
(February 18, 2005)

The Online System for Clerkship Application and Review (OSCAR) is a pilot project funded by a grant through the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. For the Fall 2005 hiring season, OSCAR will offer an internet-based application system permitting applicants to file their federal clerkship application materials online and designate those judges to whom they wish to apply. Federal judges and chambers staff will be able to read, sort, and manage those applications on-screen; they will also be able to download and print those applications. OSCAR will allow letters of recommendation to be placed confidentially in applicants' online files, either directly by the recommender, or through the applicant's law school.

OSCAR got its start with four federal courts which collaborated on the grant: the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. D.C. District Court Judge James Robertson, who also chairs the Judicial Conference Technology Committee, is coordinating the pilot project for the judges. Symplicity Corporation was chosen through a competitive bidding process to design the OSCAR system. The technical requirements for OSCAR can be found on Symplicity's web site at <https://oscar.symplicity.com/>.

At the judges' request, the American Law Deans Association, in collaboration with NALP, suggested representatives to join the OSCAR working group. Marilyn Drees (Yale), Terry Galligan (Boalt Hall), Allison Heverin (Northwestern), Shelley Rudge (American), and Marilyn Watson (Houston) have been actively involved in the working group. The law school representatives have participated in a meeting with Symplicity and court representatives, as well as several conference calls.

OSCAR is still in development, and will be reevaluated at the end of the pilot year. Some preliminary questions are answered below. Additional information will be available as the OSCAR debut approaches.

Q.   Will all applicants be able to access OSCAR for the Fall 2005 clerkship application season?

Yes. All applicants, law school graduates as well as third-year students, will be able to access and use OSCAR for the Fall 2005 application season.

Q.   When will OSCAR be available?

OSCAR will be available for document submission in June, 2005.

Q. Will there be charges for using OSCAR for the Fall 2005 clerkship application season?

No one will be charged for using OSCAR during the pilot year. A fee structure for subsequent years has not yet been considered.

Q. How will applicants, recommenders, or law school administrators learn to use OSCAR?

Symplicity Corporation is required to provide a user manual for OSCAR, and it will also supply online support. Law schools who have registered will receive links for the user manuals along with their username and password (on or about June 6). In addition, user manuals will be available for download from the OSCAR site.

Q. Will applicants and recommenders have the ability to personalize cover letters and recommendations?

Yes, they will be able to write personalized letters for some judges and upload a general letter for the rest.

Q. How many judges will be participating in OSCAR during the pilot year?

Federal judges are currently being surveyed to determine their participation in OSCAR; the judges' deadline is May 31, 2005. It is likely that a few hundred federal judges will be participating this season.

Q. Will state court judges be participating in OSCAR?

No.

Q. When will law schools be notified of participating judges, and how will that information be disseminated?

On or about June 3, 2005, participating judges will be posted on the Federal Law Clerk Information System https://lawclerks.ao.uscourts.gov as well as the OSCAR site. Information will also be disseminated electronically through NALP.

Q.   **Will the participating judges accept only electronic applications, or will they also accept paper applications?**

Right now, it is unknown whether judges using OSCAR for the Fall 2005 application season will do so exclusively. It is possible that some or all of the judges who accept applications through OSCAR will also accept paper applications.

Q.   **Where do we go if we have more questions or need more information?**

Updated information on OSCAR will be provided at NALP's 2005 Annual Education Conference in Chicago, primarily in clerkship programs on Wednesday afternoon, April 20. As additional information about OSCAR becomes known, it will disseminated electronically through NALP. The OSCAR law school representatives can also serve as a resource:

Marilyn Drees
marilyn.drees@yale.edu
203.432.1691

Shelley Rudge
serudge@wcl.american.edu
202.274.4251

Terry Galligan
tgalligan@law.berkeley.edu
510.642.7746

Marilyn Watson
mwatson@central.uh.edu
713.743.5622

Allison Heverin
a-heverin@law.northwestern.edu
312.503.1281